

### Boxford Poetry Circle Workshop

Gayle C. Heney, Poet Laureate of North Andover, led the Boxford Poetry Circle on an exploration of tanka and haikai no renga on March 20, 2012 at the Boxford Library. During the workshop, members composed a poem in the haikai no renga style with individuals spontaneously offering lines that were combined to generate a poem with 5 syllables in the first line, 7 syllables in the second line, and 5 in the third of the first stanza; then, following a space, the second stanza consisted of 7 syllables in the next line, and finally 7 in the last line. Haikai no renga is a form of cooperative poetry, unlike the traditional tanka. The tanka has the same syllable complement, but there is no space between third and fourth lines. Haikai no renga may include many alternating verses of three lines then two lines, but usually ends with a tanka as shown below.

Now just sitting here  
the days grow longer spring comes  
crocus smile at me

Saddened mourning brave yet dead  
will the sun come out for me?

We are not alone  
love burns into soft hard hands  
black soil grey field spring

Owl hooting at silver moon  
community together

Waiting wanting child  
prematurity too small

gradually grows

Like a flower leaves the seed  
flying with hope into life

Cardinals return  
green frogs sing on lily pads  
daffodils arrive  
March leaves white winter alone  
swamp maple flowers weeping

Note: Like haiku and tanka poetry, haiki no renga is usually untitled.

Ms. Heney would like to thank the members of the Boxford Poetry Circle for exploring poetry with her and making their cooperative poetry available for all to enjoy. The Boxford Poetry Circle is looking for new members. If interested, please contact the Boxford Library in Boxford, MA.